

megaregions

With more than 2,000 international companies employing nearly 115,000 employees, the Atlanta region's dependence on the global economy is obviously significant, and vice-versa. The new global environment also demands that we think beyond our borders.

Metro Atlanta, with the world's busiest airport, is an international crossroads for people and a major hub for the flow of goods and services. Home to 49 foreign consulates, 31 foreign-American chambers of commerce and 16 trade and tourism offices, metro Atlanta competes on a global level. If it were a country, metro Atlanta would be the 28th largest economy in the world.

But, this region's greatest competitive asset may exist in a new and powerful economic force. A new economic trend is emerging and stands to shift the balance of those with economic fortune and those without.

It's called the Megaregion.

The Atlanta Regional Commission's Fifty Forward initiative is an ambitious visioning effort to delve into the critical issues that will shape metro Atlanta 50 years into the future.

This will be achieved through a series of public, open-house style forums held quarterly for the next two years, attracting the best national and international thinkers on a variety of key topics vital to the future success of metro Atlanta. Topics include sustainability, population and employment shifts, regional economic trends and future development patterns.



It's your future. Be heard.
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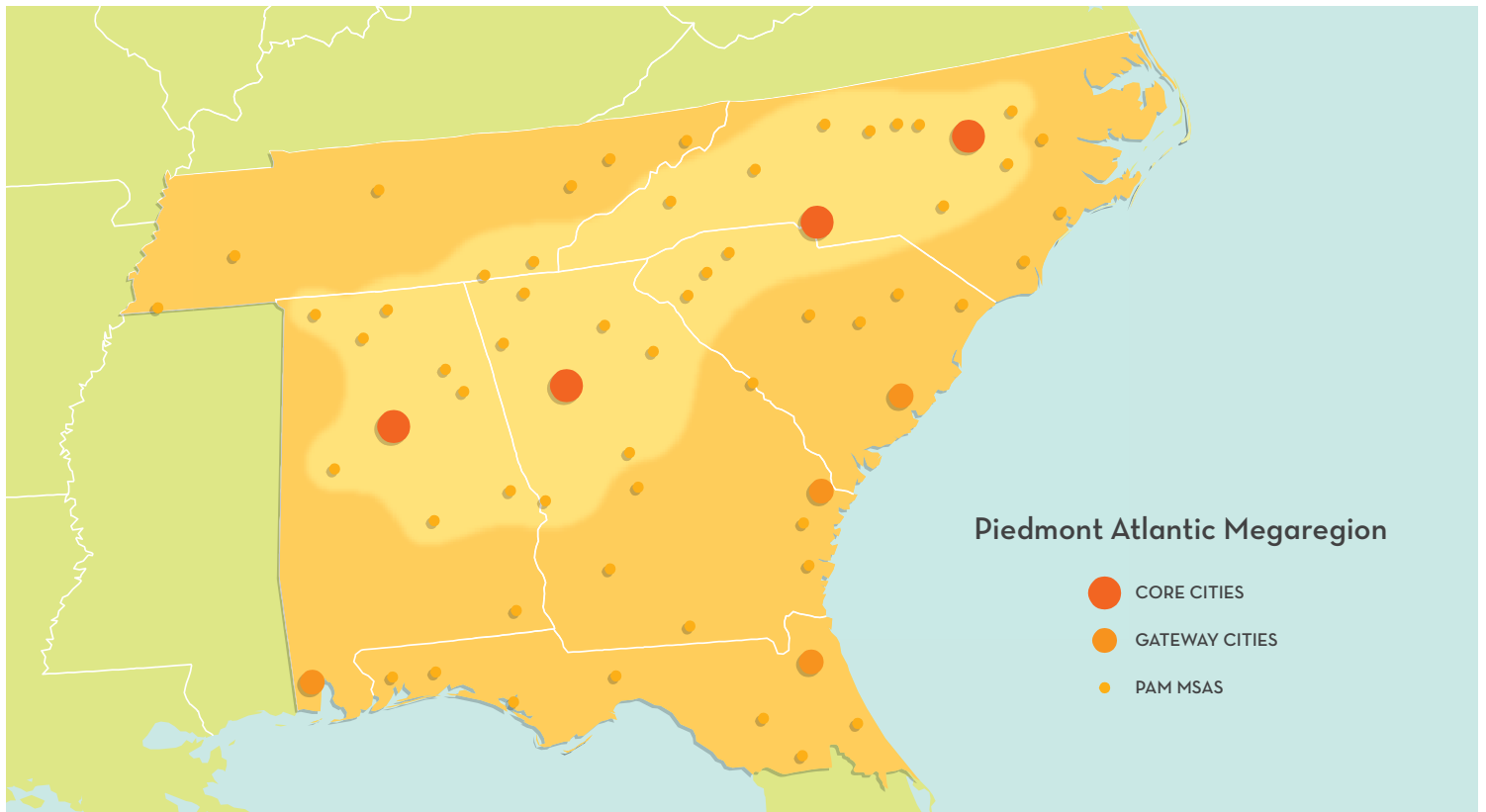
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hello world



Metro Atlanta sits in the center of an emerging Southeast economic powerhouse...the Piedmont Atlantic Megaregion (PAM). PAM is composed of core metropolitan areas running from Raleigh-Durham, to Charlotte, and on to Atlanta and Birmingham.

PAM also includes the gateway seaports of Charleston, Savannah, Jacksonville and Mobile. Along with PAM's seaports, major rail and airport cities like Nashville and Atlanta provide critical domestic and international links that enhance the flow of goods, culture, information and people.

With more than 15 million jobs and home to some 34 million people, this burgeoning Sunbelt region is expected to grow nearly 70 percent by 2050 – for a gain of more than 23 million people.

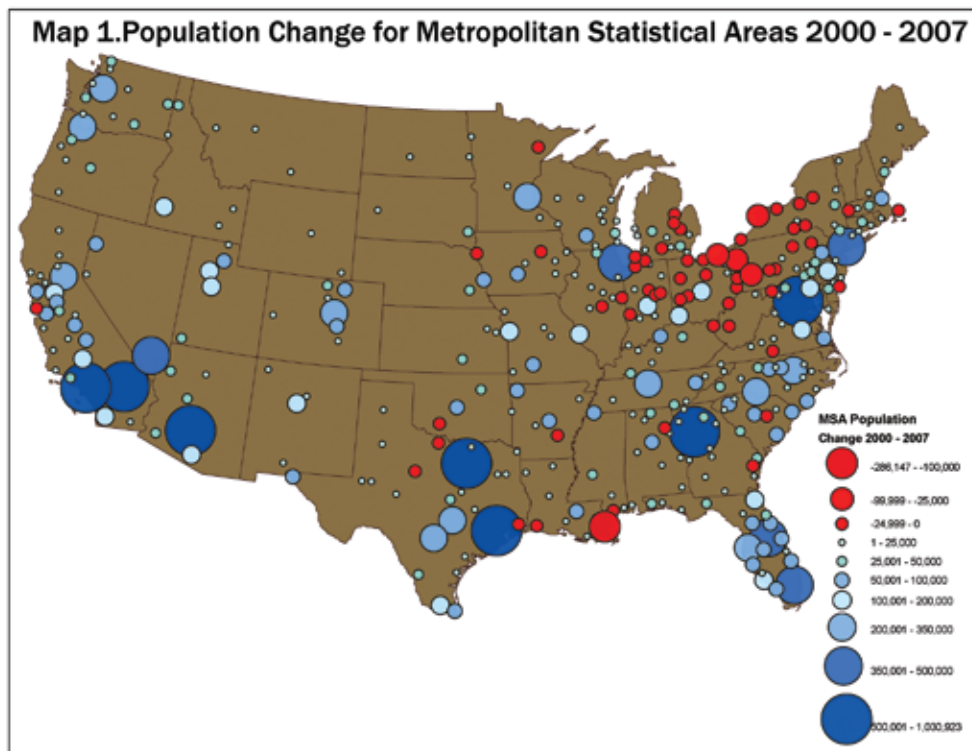
Growth of this magnitude will bring dynamic advantages and opportunities. And, those areas that jointly plan well will have strategic advantage, both nationally and internationally. Think European Union or the Boston, New York, D.C. corridor.

what is a megaregion?

Megaregions are large networks of metropolitan centers and their surrounding areas that have existing economic, environmental and infrastructure relationships. These regions share a sense of unity, stemming from economic, cultural and social ties.

In addition, they all share an accessible and highly connected inter-city transit network, usually of the high-speed variety. This connectivity is essential for economic prosperity and facilitates the sharing of cultural amenities, which in turn stimulates tourism.

Megaregions commonly cross county, state and even national borders, reinforcing the fact that they have their origins in the economic system rather than in the political system. By necessity, Megaregions claim large populations, large markets, significant economic capacity and highly skilled workforces. They are a response to the globalization of the economy and act as a way for many sectors of the world's industries to access the global marketplace.



While Metro Atlanta is the fastest-growing area in the nation since 2000, adding more than one million people in just seven years, the southeast as a whole has captured more than its fair share of growth this decade. In fact, the six states of Alabama, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee, alone, accounted for more than 28 percent of the nation's growth since 2000.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

might of the megaregion

Megaregions drive innovation and economic activity across the globe. Here are some examples of their influence on the global economy.

- The world's 10 largest Megaregions are home to only about 416 million people, or 6.5 percent of the world's population. But they account for 42.8 percent of the world's economic activity (\$13.4 trillion), 56.6 percent of its patented innovations and 55.6 percent of the most-cited scientists.
- The top 20 Megaregions account for 10 percent of the world's population, 56.6 percent of its economic activity, 76 percent of patented innovations and 76.5 percent of the most-cited scientists.
- The top 40 Megaregions make up about 17.7 percent of the world's population, produce 66 percent of economic activity, 85.6 percent of patented innovations and 83.3 percent of the most-cited scientists. (Source: Florida, et al.)

As large networks of metropolitan areas, each spreading over thousands of square miles, these Megaregions serve as economic engines and as centers of technological and cultural innovation.

	Population (millions)		LRP in 2000 (\$billions)		Patents (2001)		Authors (2001)	
	Total	Rank	Total	Rank	Total	Rank	Total	Rank
Greater Tokyo	55.1	4	\$2,500	1	91,280	1	11	16
Bos-Wash	54.3	5	\$2,200	2	21,307	3	293	1
Chi-Pitts	46	9	\$1,600	3	17,686	4	67	5
Amster-Brus-Antwerp	59.3	3	\$1,500	4	6,985	9	29	11
Osaka-Nagoya	36	14	\$1,400	5	15,897	5	9	20
London-Leed-Chester	50.1	6	\$1,200	6	3,315	14	89	3
Rome-Milan-Tur	48.3	7	\$1,000	7	4,000	33	12	14
Char-lanta	22.4	18	\$730	8	4,188	11	49	7
So California	21.4	22	\$710	9	6,902	10	74	4
Frank-Gart	23.1	17	\$630	10	3,199	15	39	8
Barcelona-Lyon	25	16	\$610	11	1,896	23	10	17
Tor-Buff-Chester	22.1	19	\$530	12	3,402	12	56	6
Seoul-San	46.1	8	\$500	13	21,833	2	0	40
Nor California	12.8	28	\$470	14	11,567	6	108	2
So Florida	15.1	25	\$430	15	2,693	19	8	22
Fuku-Kyushu	18.5	24	\$430	16	1,965	21	9	20
Paris	14.7	26	\$380	17	9,007	8	16	13
Dal-Austin	10.4	30	\$370	18	3,149	17	16	13
Hou-Orleans	9.7	32	\$330	19	2,724	18	30	10
Mexico City	45.5	10	\$290	20	91	35	0	40
Cascadia	8.9	33	\$260	21	3,179	16	33	9
Rio-Sao Paulo	43.4	12	\$230	22	457	30	0	40
Hong Kong-Zen	44.9	11	\$220	23	2,231	20	1	31
Sapporo	4.3	37	\$200	24	232	32	0	40
Vienna-pest	21.8	21	\$180	25	1,365	26	1	31
Tel Aviv-Amman-Beirut	30.9	15	\$160	26	377	31	8	22

Source: Florida, et al.

U.S. megaregions

CASCADIA | The vision for Cascadia links Seattle, Portland and Vancouver, with high-speed rail while protecting the area's unique and pristine environment. Other strategies highlight the cities' shared high-tech competencies, commitment to environmental sustainability and creative clusters in film, music and green building. Dominant industry clusters in Cascadia include software and IT, Higher Education and Research, Communication Service and Computer Equipment.

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA | The high quality of life, cultural heritage and environmental assets of the Northern California region make it an attractive – and expensive – place to live. How can sustainable land use strategies be employed while limiting the skyrocketing cost of living? The Northern California megaregion covers San Jose, San Francisco, Oakland and Sacramento. Primary clusters in Northern California include Software and IT, Communication Equipment and Services, Biotechnology, Electronics and Semiconductors.

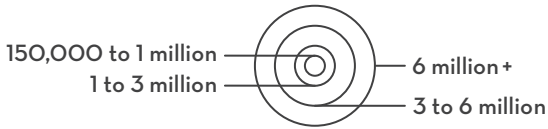
SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA | With some of the largest ports in the nation, the economy of Southern California is closely tied to the logistics and goods movement industry. This region is taking aggressive action to build infrastructure that enhances its role as a global gateway while providing opportunities for its fast-growing native-born and immigrant populations. Other dominant clusters in Southern California include Aerospace and Defense, Communication Equipment, Electronics and Mass Media.

ARIZONA SUN CORRIDOR | The Sun Corridor is equivalent to Indiana in size and population but will add another Indiana's worth of residents by 2040. Located in a desert environment, Phoenix and Tucson – the megaregion's biggest metropolitan regions – have instituted water conservation requirements and are promoting the use of desert landscaping. These efforts provide the two metropolitans with enough water for perhaps up to 20 million people, preparing the Sun Corridor for current and future growth.

TEXAS TRIANGLE | By 2050 about 35 million people, or 70 percent of the population of Texas, will live in the metropolitan areas that compose the Texas Triangle. Three of the nation's 10 largest cities are in the Triangle, including Houston, which has a port that handles more foreign tonnage than any other in the U.S. Cultural cohesion creates the potential for collaboration among the metro regions of the Triangle to address land use, transportation and environmental concerns. Dominant clusters in the Texas Triangle include Energy and Natural Resources, Construction, Semiconductors and Software and IT.

Source: America 2050
Note: America 2050 defines the Piedmont-Atlantic Megaregion differently than does the Center for Quality Growth and Regional Development at Georgia Tech

Metro Area Population



GREAT LAKES | The Great Lakes Megaregion is exploring ways to grow its economy in face of a shrinking role of the manufacturing sector. The region's assets include the environmental resources and amenities of the Great Lakes and a strong research and cultural tradition tied to its leading public universities. The Great Lakes Megaregion is one of the largest; it includes the major metropolitan areas of Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland and Pittsburgh. Primary clusters in the Great Lakes include Industrial Machinery and Supplies, Chemicals and Plastics, Wholesale and Transportation Equipment.

NORTHEAST | The Northeast is a powerhouse of density and economic output, producing 20 percent of the nation's Gross Domestic Product with 18 percent of the population and only two percent of the nation's land area. Over the next generation, the Northeast will add 18 million new residents. This population growth will demand infrastructure investments and economic growth to accommodate these new residents while preserving quality of life. The Northeast Megaregion is the oldest, most populous and most established megaregion. It includes the major metropolitan areas of Boston, New York City, Philadelphia and Washington, DC. Major clusters in the Northeast include Transportation, Mass Media, Financial Services, Software and IT and Biotechnology.

PIEDMONT ATLANTIC | The low cost of living and high quality of life in the Southeast are two reasons for this Megaregion's booming population, which is anchored by Atlanta but stretches east to Raleigh and west to Birmingham. The region is facing challenges associated with its growing population, such as increased traffic congestion, runaway land consumption and inadequate infrastructure, which it hopes to address with sustainable solutions. Major clusters in the area include Communication Services, Software and IT, Utilities and Construction.

GULF COAST | The devastation of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita and the displacement of victims along the I-10 corridor highlighted the environmental, transportation and economic links of the Gulf Coast. Despite the recent destruction, the region is expected to grow due to the continued in-migration of retirees from the Midwest.

FLORIDA | The Florida Megaregion is one of the fastest growing in the nation and possesses a wealth of diversity, with six of every 10 new residents in the last decade coming from foreign countries. It is both dense and populous, with the major international city of Miami acting as a gateway to Latin America. Regional strategies to protect the Everglades have preserved the natural heritage of the state. Dominant clusters in Florida include Hotels and Entertainment, Financial Services, Eat/Drink, Retail, Professional Services and Logistics and Distribution.

what is PAM?



The Piedmont Atlantic Megaregion (PAM) is composed of **core metropolitan areas**, including Birmingham, Atlanta, Charlotte, and Raleigh-Durham. PAM also contains numerous major cities; many of them are important government, academic and business centers.

There are also several **gateway cities**, including the seaport cities of Charleston, Savannah, Jacksonville and Mobile; and major rail and airport cities, like Nashville in addition to Atlanta.

The ports of Savannah, Mobile and Charleston ship and receive the goods that keep our economy running. Metro Atlanta acts as a central logistics hub for the distribution of those goods. Charlotte has become a significant financial hub, and many of these metro areas are connected to each other in important ways, as Table 2 shows.

	Commodity Flows flow FROM Metro area (2002)			Commodity Flows flow TO Metro area (2002)		
	Value (in millions)	Tons (in thousands)	Miles (in millions)	Value (in millions)	Tons (in thousands)	Miles (in millions)
Atlanta	\$158,772	202,099	27,909	\$184,361	226,936	54,337
Birmingham	\$33,462	63,492	16,073	\$33,289	77,821	37,661
Charlotte	\$90,039	62,832	11,412	\$69,715	78,536	18,420
Greensboro	\$60,096	45,110	7,135	\$55,449	54,784	8,749
Greenville	\$44,555	21,947	3,906	\$30,879	24,169	4,274
Jacksonville	\$46,433	34,590	5,938	\$38,074	57,940	12,587
Memphis	\$105,935	67,237	15,378	\$54,957	56,634	10,942
Nashville	\$60,864	50,617	7,362	\$51,363	66,526	11,221
Raleigh	\$43,541	33,056	4,164	\$40,313	51,066	9,339
Spartanburg	\$19,899	15,516	4,331	\$11,933	10,894	2,710
Total: Selected	\$663,596	596,496	103,608	\$570,333	705,306	170,240

Table 2 shows commodity flows to and from some of the major cities located in the Piedmont-Atlantic Megaregion. According to the Commodity Flow Survey of 2002 conducted by the Bureau of Transportation Statistics and the U.S. Census Bureau, the value of goods flowing out of these cities was estimated at more than \$663 billion in 2002, while the value of goods coming into these cities was estimated at more than \$570 billion.

Source: 2002 Commodity Flow Survey, BTS

why is PAM important?

Like many of the world's most pressing problems, there are simply some issues that are too vast for one jurisdiction, region, state or even nation to solve on its own. The current system is set up such that individual cities, counties and states within the same geographic area often compete with one another for scarce resources. Many parts of the world, however, have moved beyond this broken model and are organizing themselves around the concept of Megaregions. To compete with these areas of the world, bigger may be better.

Here are just a few example of the issues that could be planned for at the Megaregion level:

Globalization. Globalization and free trade have eroded traditional borders and made national economic policy less effective. Megaregions now compete directly with one another, not against states and nations. All metros in the PAM Megaregion account for some \$1.2 trillion of Gross Domestic Product (GDP). That's about 10 percent of the nation's GDP. Imagine what could happen if we started acting like a Megaregion?

Economics. Do we still believe that "decoupling," a theory which states that the economies of Asia and Europe have diversified enough to the point they no longer depend on the United States to any great extent, is real? Do we still think that housing, for example, is purely a local issue without ramifications beyond a local jurisdiction's borders? Although the complexity of the current housing and economic turmoil throughout the world is enormous, the one thing we have learned is that we are connected in very real ways, for better or for worse.

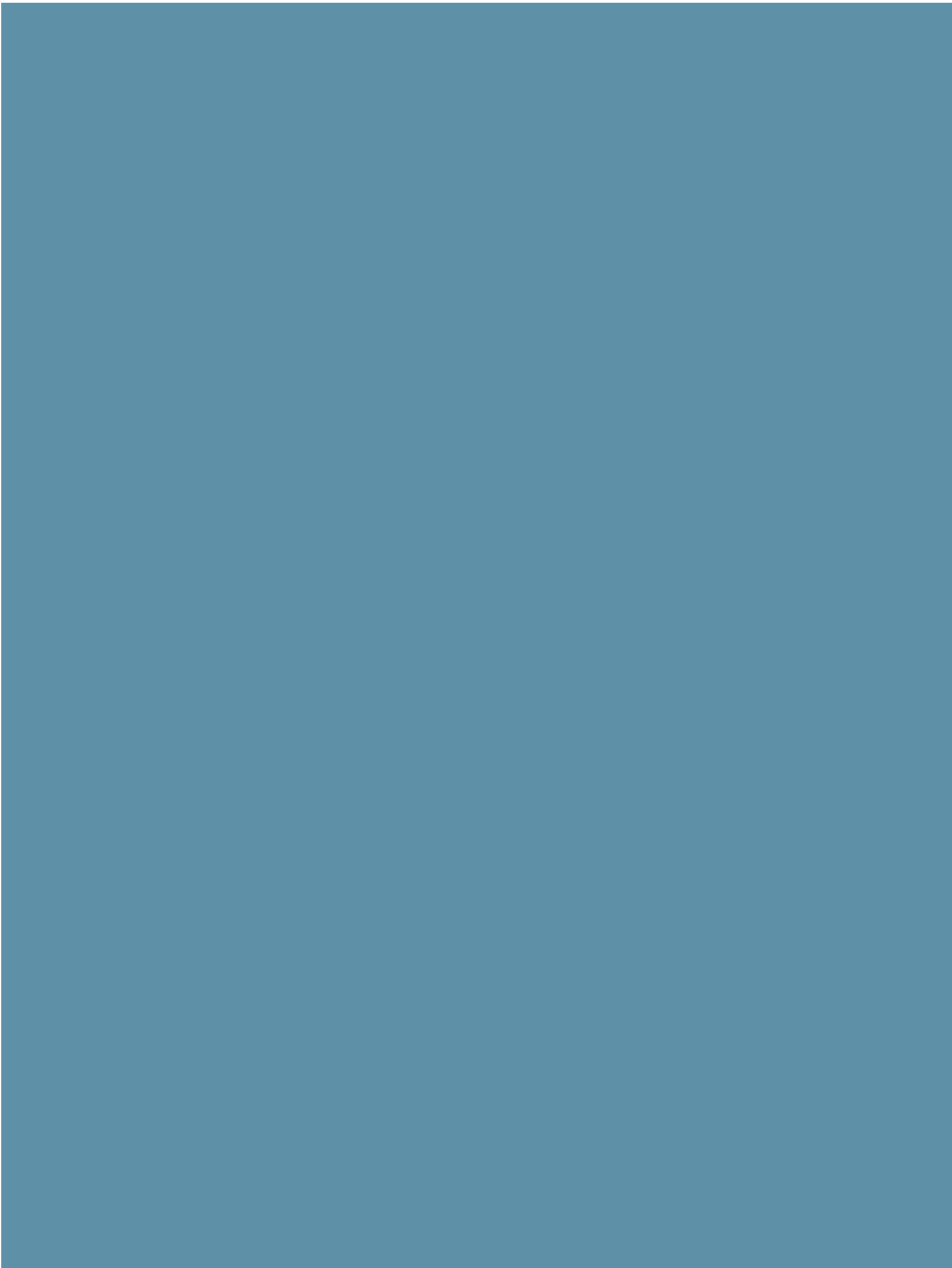
Water. Struggles with water supply and quality are gripping many areas of the world, including PAM, as three of its states – Georgia, Alabama and Florida – quarrel in the court system over access to water. As we know, our water systems know no political boundaries, so why are we acting as if they do?

Transportation. In the four core cities of PAM, congestion costs rose from an estimated \$200 million in 1982 to more than \$3.5 billion in 2005. Meanwhile, time to spend with our families or other pursuits is dwindling due to the time we sit in traffic. In 1982, travelers in these four cities wasted more than 21 million hours sitting in traffic. In 2005, we wasted more than 184 million hours. Much has been discussed about a high-speed rail system coursing throughout the southeast that would bring greater connectivity among the major cities. Let's hope we can we find the consensus to make that happen.

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